



CODY REGION newsletter

Young hunters harvest deer, donate meat

Last month, Worland Game Warden Matt Lentsch coordinated the Young Hunters Care project in Worland. “Youth hunters paired with adult mentors harvested doe deer, processed the carcasses themselves and donated the venison to elderly persons in the community who could no longer hunt,” Lentsch said. “Seven young hunters from Worland participated in the program and seven deer, which turned out to be over 300 pounds of processed meat, were donated. Right Choice Processing donated their expertise, facility, and supplies to facilitate the processing.



Felix Lentsch, one of seven young hunters who participated in the Young Hunters Care program, with a doe harvested in November.



Jenna Grzybowski, with her first doe ever harvested through the Young Hunters Care program.



Young hunters receiving instruction on how to process their deer at Right Choice Processing in Worland.

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In the water

Ice fishing the Bighorn Basin: Deaver Reservoir

Located just three miles northwest of the town of Deaver, Deaver Reservoir provides the Bighorn Basin with an array of seasonal recreational opportunities that include fishing, boating, swimming, hiking, picnicking, and biking. Arguably, the reservoir's biggest attraction is happening right now, through holes drilled in the ice.

Greg Mayton, Cody Region AIS specialist and ice fishing fanatic, said Deaver is a great place to ice fish because it's one of the first lakes to form safe ice in the early winter months and one of the last lakes to lose ice in the spring. "Safety should always be your first consideration when ice fishing," Mayton said. "Be sure to have the proper safety equipment and check the thickness of any ice before venturing out onto it, and continue checking it every 100 to 150 feet or so."



Cody Region's AIS Specialist and ice fishing fanatic Greg Mayton. In upcoming issues, Mayton will discuss ice fishing on Buffalo Bill Reservoir and Upper Sunshine Reservoir.

Deaver is one of the lakes in the Bighorn Basin with special regulations. When ice fishing Deaver, up to six fishing rods or tip-ups per person are allowed, and the daily limit of walleye is three walleye of any length per person.

"And walleye are the prize that most fisherman are after when fishing through holes in the ice on Deaver," Mayton said. "Most of the time, walleye are most active in the low light dawn and dusk periods of the day. What's great about Deaver is that early in the ice fishing season, fishermen can have great luck catching them throughout the entire day."

"When ice fishing for walleyes, I like to have five tip-ups set with the best live minnows I can find. I spread out my tip-ups in varying depths and cover as much water as needed to find out if the fish are hanging in different spots. When setting the depth of bait with walleye, I like to put it within six to 12 inches from the bottom. I keep the sixth rod on the hole with the fish finder and try an array of different lures to entice the walleyes to bite. My favorite lures include jigging spoons, swimming lures and jigs. The majority of the time, I tip the lures with a minnow head or a grub to hedge my bets that the walleye will take the bait if within striking distance," Mayton said.

"Whenever I venture on the ice I always bring my trusty electronic fish finder to help me sort out what is going on underneath me," Mayton said. "These are not always needed to catch fish but they can be a trusty tool for the committed ice fisherman. Be safe out there and hope to see you on the ice."

FIVE ICE TIPS

1. CHECK THICKNESS

The rough guidelines for clear, new solid ice are:

- 2 inches – Stay off
- 4 inches – OK for ice fishing or other activities on foot
- Check the thickness of the ice every 100 to 150 feet.
- Never take any vehicles, snowmobiles or ATVs onto the ice.

2. BE SURE IT'S SAFE

- Avoid fissures in the ice and large cracks that can emerge in a lake
- Clear ice is stronger than white ice, which has frozen, thawed and refrozen and is not always stable
- White ice can also be from air bubbles or frozen snow and is much weaker than clear ice. For white ice, double the recommended thickness.

3. REMEMBER

No matter your preparation and ice conditions, ice should never be considered 100 percent safe. Be prepared and cautious at all times.

4. BUDDY SYSTEM

Anglers should never fish alone. Always fish with someone else and be certain to let a friend know where you are

5. STAY WARM

To prevent hypothermia if an ice fishing accident does occur, pack an extra set of clothes and hot liquids.

On the ground

Youth pheasant hunt on Yellowtail



A pheasant hunter's dog eagerly awaits a hunt on Yellowtail.

The annual youth only pheasant hunt on Yellowtail Wildlife Habitat Management Area was conducted on Nov. 19. Due to winter-like road conditions the day before, pheasants were stocked for the youth hunt that morning around 9:30 a.m., instead of the day before as originally scheduled. Lovell Game Warden Dillon Herman said it turned out to be a cold, but beautiful day and quite a few hunters showed up to take advantage of the youth only hunt.



Two young pheasant hunters during the Nov. youth hunt on Yellowtail.



Pheasants released on Yellowtail WHMA.

Trespass complaint

In November, Greybull Game Warden Bill Robertson investigated a trespass complaint. A Greybull area landowner caught and confronted a 16-year-old hunter driving across his property, shooting at a rabbit. In lieu of a citation, Robertson will have the youth write an essay on the rights of private landowners and how sportsmen can determine public from private land. The landowner also suspected the young hunter had shot his private property sign, but that allegation could not be proven.

Right: A no trespassing sign a Greybull landowner posted on private property that was shot.



Of interest

Dead sheep in Shell canyon

Last month, Greybull Game Warden Bill Robertson and Damage Technician Jeff Abplanalp investigated a report of a dead big-horn sheep ram. A hiker found the ram in a remote part of Shell Canyon and reported it to Robertson. The 5.5-year-old ram had been there for some time and despite an extensive necropsy, cause of death could not be determined. No illegal activity is suspected.



Maintaining public access areas



Habitat and Access technician Kendra Ostrom replaces a sign at the Willwood Public Access Area south of Powell. Every year, signs at Game and Fish public access areas have to be replaced due to vandalism. Each sign costs approximately \$350.

Sunrise on the North Fork

North Cody Game Warden Travis Crane captured this image of a stunning sunrise on the North Fork on November 1.

